

Members Present: Ed Behn, Chair, Gary Wells, Lisa Blazejewski, Peter Allen. Hank Rauch, Jim Tepper, Kathy Rosenblum Senie (arrived at 7:20). Absent: Sharon Kaiser.

At 7:00 p.m. Mr. Behn called the meeting to order in Room 23 of the Forbes Building.

### **Call to Order/Open Forum**

Newly elected Town Moderator, John E. Arnold, wanted to address the Committee. He has had to resign from the AFC in order to fulfill his new duties. He mentioned he was appointed to the AFC in 2006 and hopes all of the current members will continue to remain on the Committee. Mr. Arnold mentioned the Town Meeting format and doesn't have any changes. He feels his role as Town Moderator will be to encourage discussion while not trying to influence any outcome. Mr. Arnold said he is still available to help the AFC. Mr. Behn thanked Mr. Arnold and said he was a tremendous asset to the group and complimented his good judgment. Mr. Behn wished Mr. Arnold well in his new role as Town Moderator and the Committee presented Mr. Arnold with Norman Rockwell's painting of "Freedom of Speech" to give Mr. Arnold some inspiration. Mr. Wells also provided a handout of Mr. Arnold's infamous motion regarding finalizing the Report & Recommendations booklet as follows: (AFC Member) moves to approve the Advisory Finance Committee booklet as amended and edited at tonight's meeting, with the provision that typographic and formatting changes – including verifying the consistent and correct use of amounts – which do not impact the substance can be made by the Chairman, the Vice-Chair, and his or her designee". Mr. Wells made a motion to memorialize Mr. Arnold's infamous motion. The vote to approve Mr. Wells' motion is 6 in favor, with 6 being present.

Mr. Wells asked Mr. Arnold, as Town Moderator, about the budget motion and said he had highlighted some changes. Mr. Arnold said he would review the changes with Town Manager, Jim Malloy, Town Counsel, Greg Franks, and former Town Moderator, Joe Harrington, to make sure it is correct and get back to Mr. Wells. Mr. Allen asked Mr. Arnold if he knew the procedure for a secret ballot. Mr. Arnold said the traditional way is for someone to make a motion to fix the method of voting at Town Meeting. Mr. Arnold said the motion can be made at any time during the meeting but requires a majority vote. It also takes some time procedurally to put in place and then the votes (slips of paper) need to be counted.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Behn decided to postpone voting on approval of the minutes from 2-24-14 until the next meeting to give Committee members a chance to review.

### **Snow & Ice Budget:**

Mr. Wells said he heard from DPW Business Administrator, Maria-Elaina Riggieri, and they need additional funds to purchase salt, sand, and diesel fuel. The DPW is requesting another \$30,000 in Expenses for the Snow & Ice budget. To date, the AFC has approved \$200,000, and now need to approve another \$30,000, bringing the total to \$230,000, which breaks down to \$155,000 for Expenses and \$75,000 in Salaries & Wages. Mr. Wells moved that the Committee vote to approve that the DPW be allowed an additional deficit spend in the amount of \$30,000 for Expenses for the Snow & Ice budget. The vote to approve the authorization is 6 in favor with 6 being present.

### **Continued Review of FY15 Budget & Articles:**

**Council on Aging (COA)** – Mr. Behn informed the Committee that the COA's request for a 4<sup>th</sup> bus driver did not go through the proper channels for approval so the position does not exist. Mr. Behn said that any request for a new position or an additional position has to go through the Personnel Board first and then can be voted on at Town Meeting. He mentioned that the COA could come back in the fall at the Special Town Meeting with an article to request the position and funding. For the upcoming Town Meeting, the COA's Expenses line item was brought back to the Town Manager's recommendation, since otherwise taxes would be raised for something that can't be spent. Mr. Tepper asked if the current position for the other drivers maxed out at 19 hours per week. Mr. Behn said that is the

maximum for a part time worker and has to do with the benefits received. Mr. Tepper asked if the driver could be a contract worker and the amount for their salary put under the "Expenses" line item similar to what's being proposed for the outreach worker. Mr. Behn said that he thought a motion could be made on town floor to increase the expense line for the driver and Mr. Arnold agreed and said that was the correct procedure. Mr. Rauch was uncomfortable with the COA going outside - or around - the hiring process. There was continued discussion about following the proper hiring procedure and suggestions about re-visiting this topic at the Special Town Meeting in the fall. Mr. Wells mentioned that perhaps the COA should be invited in next month to inform them of what steps need to be taken to hire the additional bus driver, but Ms. Blazejewski disagreed and felt that the COA should already be aware of that process. Mr. Wells moved that the Committee recommends that the Town so votes Salary & Wages of \$262,822 for the FY15 Council on Aging budget. The vote to approve Mr. Wells' motion is 6 in favor, and 1 abstention (Tepper), with 7 being present. Mr. Behn asked if the Expenses line item for the COA, which includes the outreach worker, needs to be re-voted and the Committee felt it did not. The current vote of the AFC supports the outreach worker with a vote of 6-1-1.

**Article 19 – Lease Authorization** – Mr. Behn mentioned that the Green Technology Advisory Committee (GTAC) met last night. Planning Board Chair, Lester Hensley, emailed his proposal for how he felt the motion for Article 19 should read after attending the GTAC meeting and Mr. Behn thought Mr. Hensley tried to represent all parties involved. Mr. Behn forwarded Mr. Hensley's email statement to Committee members for their consideration. Mr. Behn said that the AFC can either take a vote tonight or wait until Town Meeting floor. Mr. Rauch, who attended last night's GTAC meeting, said he thought Town Manager, Jim Malloy, made a convincing case to authorize the lease, in order to get proposals, so people can react. Mr. Rauch thought that Mr. Hensley's email gave the Selectmen and other departments involved more guidance in the process, but also felt the grant that the Town received provided expertise that was needed in tying down the details for this project. Mr. Rauch said that if the motion was changed to what Mr. Hensley proposes, he would support it. Mr. Allen felt that the AFC should wait until Town Meeting to vote since the motion could change. Mr. Tepper agreed and said he would vote against the current motion but would wait to see if a new motion was proposed and his vote could change. Ms. Rosenblum Senie said she would vote against this article since she felt other interested parties didn't have enough opportunity for input. Ms. Rosenblum Senie asked if the GTAC meeting last night addressed the issues that other parties brought up regarding this article. Mr. Rauch said there was a smaller group at last night's GTAC meeting that wanted the land used at Hocomonco Pond for passive recreation and not developed. There was also another larger group at last night's meeting that Mr. Rauch felt was more concerned with EPA regulations and unresolved issues on the property that could become a liability for the town. But Mr. Rauch pointed out that the Town needed to get approval for the lease before some of these issues can be investigated. Ms. Rosenblum Senie asked if the parties that felt they didn't have enough time to explore all uses of the land still felt that way after the GTAC meeting. Mr. Behn said that he thought that was the case and that a motion needed to be crafted that gives the okay for the lease, but restricts what can be authorized, so these groups can still be involved in how the land is used. Mr. Rauch mentioned that it is expensive to get an RFP without authority. Ms. Rosenblum Senie felt there should be a master plan, similar to what was required with the former State Hospital land. Mr. Rauch pointed out that the trails were listed and that 6 acres would be leased. Ms. Rosenblum Senie said that it doesn't necessarily need to be 6 acres. Mr. Allen agreed and said this was a sensitive subject. He suggested that the AFC could give an alert to voters and provide a recommendation - but also that a lot could change in the next week and a half and that the AFC doesn't have a recommendation right now. Mr. Allen is torn between the two thoughts and wondered if this article could be passed over. Mr. Behn suggested that the AFC could vote tonight and then re-vote at Town Meeting, and mentioned that the Selectmen have not yet voted on this article. Ms. Rosenblum Senie pointed out that there have been instances where the AFC has waited to vote because more information may be forthcoming. Mr. Behn mentioned the email from Jim Malloy to Don Burn where he recognized that the process could have been better and proposed a new motion – and then Mr. Hensley provided his ideas on arriving at a better motion. Mr. Wells felt the AFC should postpone voting and let some of these details be worked out on Town Meeting floor. Mr. Tepper wanted to vote on this article and made the motion to move that the Town vote to defeat the article as printed in the warrant. Mr. Allen said that he would vote in favor of defeating this article so voters could see that this is a contentious issue. Ms. Blazejewski agreed and said she is opposed to this article in its current state as she isn't sure what is right or legal and pointed out that the Selectmen didn't vote on their own motion. The vote to defeat is 5 in favor (Allen, Rauch, Rosenblum Senie, Blazejewski, Tepper), and 2 abstentions (Behn, Wells), with 7 being present. Mr. Behn made note that the AFC recommended that this article be defeated.

**Article 20 – Dimensional Regulations on Town Owned Parcel** – Mr. Tepper made the same motion to defeat Article 20 and moved that the Town vote to defeat the article as printed in the warrant. Mr. Rauch asked if Article 20 was dependent on Article 19. Mr. Wells said it was somewhat - though Article 20 is setting dimensional regulations and could still be voted on. Ms. Rosenblum Senie and Mr. Tepper disagreed and felt the language was specific to Article 19. Mr. Behn thought the vote should be consistent so as not to confuse voters. The vote to defeat is 5 in favor (Allen, Rauch, Rosenblum Senie, Blazejewski, Tepper), and 2 abstentions (Behn, Wells), with 7 being present.

**Article 16 - Electronic Voting** – Mr. Wells said that after originally voting against this article that he gave it some thought and wanted to reconsider his position. At first the request seemed like a lot of money, but then he felt that after looking at costs for set up of equipment, length of time at Town Meeting, cost of the clickers, and breakdown of equipment, plus staff, that the price wasn't that unreasonable. Mr. Wells pointed out that costs were spent by the Town on the recent election that took place on March 4<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Rosenblum Senie said her objection wasn't that the company was overcharging, but that it wasn't worth it. She pointed out that Town elections are required by law, but electronic voting is a choice. Mr. Allen looked at contentious issues on the current warrant – Historical Commission, Article 19, and Asian outreach worker – and didn't feel the cost of \$20,000 per election was worth it to keep votes secret. Mr. Allen pointed out that there is a procedure in place – and that is why he asked – for using a secret ballot. Mr. Allen felt that if costs came down in the future that he may vote for it but right now feels it is too expensive. Mr. Tepper agreed and felt it was a cost issue, as did Mr. Rauch and both felt they'd like to see it proposed again in the future when it is less expensive. Mr. Rauch said that historically we expect voters to be open at Town Meeting. Mr. Behn said that the word "open" was used as in "open to all voters" and wanted to distinguish between that and whether you need to know how someone is voting. Mr. Behn mentioned that the core of the Town Meeting is that individuals have the opportunity to stand and make their arguments and that the clickers are for voters. He wanted to separate the two roles since Mr. Behn felt there was a good reason for electronic voting and that a secret ballot mitigates coercion or retribution for how one votes. Mr. Behn didn't feel costs would come down anytime soon and also addressed software security issues. Mr. Wells moved that the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$40,000 for the purpose of the article as printed in the warrant. The vote to approve the article recommendation is 3 in favor (Behn, Wells, Blazejewski), and 4 opposed (Allen, Rauch, Rosenblum Senie, Tepper), with 7 being present. Mr. Rauch made a motion that the Town vote to defeat the article as printed in the warrant. The vote was 4 in favor (Allen, Rauch, Rosenblum Senie, Tepper) and 3 opposed (Wells, Behn, Blazejewski), with 7 being present.

#### **Review of the Report & Recommendations Book**

The Committee reviewed the R&R booklet, page by page, for grammar, spelling and content. Once that was complete, Mr. Wells made a motion to approve the Advisory Finance Committee booklet as amended and edited at tonight's meeting, with the provision that typographic and formatting changes – including verifying the consistent and correct use of amounts – which do not impact the substance can be made by the Chairman, the Vice-Chair, and his or her designee. The vote to approve Mr. Wells' motion is 7 in favor with 7 being present.

Mr. Behn mentioned that he would get the edited version of the R&R booklet out to Committee members tomorrow. He will need any final changes by Saturday night so he can forward the book to Curry Printing on Sunday. The final page count will be at about 44 pages. Mr. Behn asked Committee members about the number of books that should be printed. He mentioned that 350 books would cost \$400 and 400 books would be \$498. The consensus from the Committee was to order 400 books.

#### **Chairman, Committee Liaison, and Department Liaison Reports**

Ms. Blazejewski informed the Committee that the next Charter Review meeting is Monday evening, March 10<sup>th</sup>. She plans on attending the meeting. Ms. Blazejewski's appointment as the Charter Review liaison will be voted on at the Selectmen's meeting on March 11<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Tepper asked if any additional information had been reported back regarding the electrical contractor. Mr. Rauch mentioned that he did speak with Building Commissioner, Tin Htway. Mr. Htway said that the electrical contractor, Joe Orlando, is paid for each inspection that he completes and is also guaranteed a minimum number of inspections per week and has been operating this way for a number of years. Since the budget was being

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overspent, the way it was made up was to get Mr. Orlando to accept a lesser rate for inspections but also to guarantee a minimum number of inspections per week.

**Comments and Concerns of Committee Members**

It was noted that the next AFC meeting will be at 12 noon on Saturday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, prior to the Town Meeting.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Wells made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:58 p.m. The vote to adjourn was 7 in favor, with 7 being present.

**Document List**

R&R Book – Draft 3-6-14

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Thomas

AFC Administrative Assistant